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SUBJECT: AU Criticizes SLM for Torture Incident

¶1. On August 1, the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) released a statement regarding a recent incident of alleged torture that occurred on the AMIS compound in El Fasher, Darfur. The statement calls on the SLM to cease such actions, investigate the incident, and to hold those accountable to blame.

¶2. The text of the statement is as follows:

(Begin text)

August 1, 2006

Statement by the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on the practice of torture by the SLA, Mini Minawi

The attention of the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission in the Sudan, Ambassador Baba Gana Kingibe has been drawn to allegations of the practice of torture by the forces of the SLM loyal to Mr. Mini Arkoi Minawi. These persistent and consistent allegations were brought to the attention of the SLA authorities.

The Special Representative is, however, shocked and horrified at the incidence of torture which occurred in the SLA quarters in El Fasher whereby a middle aged unidentified individual was brutally beaten and blooded all over, including severe blows to his head, on two successive days, the 17th and 18th July, 2006. When members of the AMIS Force Headquarters Company led by their company commander attempted to intervene, they were rebuffed by SLA elements who dragged the victim back into their compound. Colonel Ali Mokhtar, the leader of the group claimed that the victim was an SLA soldier under discipline. The fate of the victim is not known.

This incident lends credence to the previous incessant allegations. Ambassador Kingibe deplores the practice of torture and abuse of Human Rights even if it involves a member of the SLA. He urges Mr. Minawi to order an immediate end to this practice. He further demands a thorough investigation of this particular incident and the culprits made accountable. The AMIS is prepared to continue extending non military assistance within its means to the Sudanese parties as required by the DPA, but such cooperation cannot be expected by any party that condones torture and inhumane treatment of its own members, much less the civilian population in Darfur.

(End text)

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